



WCPD Naturalist Report, April 2019

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Community Connections

- **Otterbein Nature Series:** March's program on "Vernal Pools and Spring Salamander Breeding" was led by Caesar Creek Lake Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger, Jessica Zimmer. She did a great job, and they may be interested in joining for future presentations.
- **Butterfly Garden at Landen Deerfield:** local artists Amy Lynn Johnson and Lynn Baird are nearly finished with the project. Installation will be the next step! Jeff, you mentioned possibly having a rain barrel and gutter system to donate for the shelter next to the garden. If this is still the case, please email or text me!



- **Cub Scout Pack 417, Den 9 Bears:** Scouts have constructed mason bee houses for the solar/pollinator area. I would love some help deciding where to hang them. Ideal locations are 6' off ground with morning sun exposure, but there are 12 of them (4"x6" each) so we can try lots of different spots to see what works best. FYI, mason bees are solitary bees that are excellent pollinators. They are docile and will not sting unless severely provoked; in fact, the males don't even have stingers!
- **American Heritage Girls:** Wildlife Badge activity at St. Margaret of York on 4/4/19. We studied the taxidermy fox, owl, and raccoon, plus they met the program turtles and snake. 15 girls and 5 adults in attendance.
- **New Volunteer:** Dennis Borda, an OCVN and Otterbein resident, would like to help monitor the bluebird houses at Keever Park. I've put him in touch with Dave Woehr and Bill Lindauer. We are excited to have him join our wonderful team!
- **OCVN Updates:** Bill Lindauer has been busy leading wildflower hikes at Hisey, Dianna Keneally has been putting in a lot of time on the signage project for the solar/pollinator habitat, and Dave Woehr has continued to be an imperative part of our programs, both behind the scenes and with the public. Carol Soehner has been helping me with our program turtles, and even provided an outdoor enclosure for Sheldon the box turtle. Kathy Schroeder is a great help with facilitating our Otterbein Nature Series, running the Friends' website and sending out e-newsletters, and Bill Schroeder's assistance with the upcoming fishing derby will be invaluable. Sue Saari, Micki Marquis, Bill Schiemann, Carol Carraway, Bob Henn, Donna Shaw, Peggy Logue, Angela McMahan, and Kate Bowles are big contributors to our success as well. We look forward to welcoming Judy and Fred Bay as official OCVNs as they complete their certification course! As we ramp up for the busy season, I will be asking for lots of help, and I want you all to know I am SO very grateful for all of your contributions!

Coming Up

- **Homeschool Program:** I'm leading a program about reptiles to Amy Butler's group on Friday, 4/12/19 at 11am. Our program animals are excited for another outing.
- **Cincinnati Nature Center:** I'll be assisting Bob H. as he leads an OCVN class on Wildflowers on 4/13/19 from 1:30-4:30. More potential volunteers!
- **Knight of Innovation:** I'm hosting a booth at Kings High School to share info about our parks and my involvement with JF Burns students through Mother Nature's Classroom on 4/16/19, 4:30-8pm. Last year it was a great marketing opportunity for our summer programs.
- **Little Miami Conservancy Partnership:** I'm hosting a booth for their Earth Day event on Sunday, 4/21/19, from 1-4pm at Nisbet Park in downtown Loveland. Swing by if you're free!

- **Otterbein Nature Series:** see attached flyer for second quarter offerings. Bob Henn will be leading “Spring Wildflowers” on 4/22. If you are free, please join us!
- **Atria Springboro Nature Series:** Bill Lindauer will be leading a program on birds on Monday, 4/29/19 at 11am.
- **South Lebanon Elementary School field trip:** Approximately 550 students, teachers, and chaperones will be joining us at WC Armco Park on Friday, 5/3/19. Buses will arrive around 10:30am and leave at 1pm. **I NEED HELPERS** to assist station leaders with their programs. Wildlife Officer Jason Keller, Warren Co Soil and Water Conservation District (WCSWCD) education specialist Cindy Meyer, and I will be hosting stations. The more adult bodies, the better! Our biggest challenge is crowd control and making sure everyone stays moving in the right direction when it's time to switch.
- **Fishing Derby and Solar Array Ribbon Cutting:** Mark your calendars for Saturday, 6/8/19 from 10am-2pm! It's a joint effort with Little Miami Conservancy this year! Wildlife Officer Jason Keller and K9 Scout will be mingling with the participants, and WCSWCD will have their water trailer on site for participants to visit. I will have a booth about the Solar/Pollinator Habitat. LMC will be hosting the luncheon. I'm meeting with Amy Butler and Bill Schroeder this Friday at 10am to work out details. If you're interested in joining us, please let me know!
- **Tech-Free Tuesdays:** These will run every Tuesday from Memorial Day to Labor Day, alternating locations between Landen-Deerfield Park and WC Armco Park. See attached flyer!
- **Miami University Institute for Learning in Retirement:** I'll be leading a five-week program entitled “Nature in Your Own Backyard” at the West Chester campus this fall. Details to follow! Thank you to Patricia Decker for the connection!
- **Little Miami Watershed Network:** I'll be hosting an activity at their 9/7/19 fundraiser at Hisey Park. Details TBD.

Long-Term Projects

- **Solar Array/Pollinator Project:** Solar array is hooked up and powering the park! Seeding of annuals per Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative specs will take place in early May. Perennial seeding will take place in December/January. There has been a LOT of behind-the-scenes work going on! All of the “bare dirt” area in the picture below, including the portion inside the solar array, will be filled with native wildflowers! Dianna Kenneally can provide details about the status of her grant project for signage.
- **Wildflower Restoration Project and Accessible Trail:** at Landen-Deerfield Park is moving forward. **I'd like help coming up with ideas on funding signage for this area** when it's finished. Nature Works grant?
- **Little Miami Conservancy Partnership:** I've been meeting with Eric Partee from LMC and Melissa Proffitt from WCSWCD. LMC has funding to purchase several high-tech water monitoring kits and would love our help utilizing them for educational programs with the public. They will lend us the equipment, and we can run the programs. I know we have several areas within our PD where we could do some “stream encounters” with this technology as well as macroinvertebrate sampling. Kits are to be purchased by mid-summer and we can utilize them as soon as they are in. **If you can think of Little Miami River watershed access points within our PD, please let me know!** This could be an excellent opportunity to educate the general public on water quality and citizen science, and there's no cost to us!





Tech-Free Tuesdays 2019

Unplug and get outside with Naturalist Shannon Russell Pennington
10-11am every Tuesday from Memorial Day to Labor Day!



1st, 3rd, and 5th Tuesdays
Landen-Deerfield Park
2258 W US Hwy 22/3
Maineville, OH 45039

2nd and 4th Tuesdays
Warren Co Armco Park
1223 OH-741
Lebanon, OH 45036

Free for kids of all ages! No registration necessary.

A responsible guardian must stay with children during program.



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Warren County Park District Otterbein Nature Series

Second Quarter, 2019

Spring Wildflowers



Mon., 4/22, 1-2pm

Join Bob Henn, biologist, Otterbein resident, and author of the guide book *Wildflowers of Ohio*, to learn all about these beautiful plants.

Herpetology



Mon., 5/27, 1-2pm

Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist (OCVN) Rick Kneisel will present information on Ohio's native reptiles and amphibians.

The Little Miami River



Mon., 6/24, 1-2pm

OCVNs Hope Taft and Bill Schieman from the Little Miami River Kleeners and LM Watershed Network will share the uniqueness of the Little Miami.

Programs are free and open to the public!



Thank you to Otterbein Senior Life of Lebanon and the Friends of Warren County Park District for providing these educational experiences. Do you have a suggestion for an upcoming program? Email WCPD Naturalist Shannon Russell Pennington at MotherNaturesClassroom@gmail.com

Programs are held indoors in the Phillippi Meeting Room at Otterbein. 585 N. State Route 741, Lebanon, OH 45036.